

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
MARY RILEY STYLES PUBLIC LIBRARY**

Held virtually through Skype.

**May 20, 2020**

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

Chairperson Stephanie Oppenheimer called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. She read the following statement regarding the meeting circumstances and the method for public comment:

The meeting for which this agenda has been posted will be held pursuant to and in compliance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, Section 2.2-3708.2 and state in local legislation adopted to allow for continued government operation during the COVID-19 declared emergency.

All members of the Library Board of Trustees are present at this meeting through electronic means. All members of the public may view the electronic meeting via Skype. The link has been posted.

Public comments may be submitted to [jcarroll@fallschurchva.gov](mailto:jcarroll@fallschurchva.gov) until 7:30 pm on May 20, 2020. All comments will be provided to the library Board of Trustees members and comments received by the deadline will be summarized during the meeting.

**Attendance**

Stephanie Oppenheimer  
Jeff Peterson  
Chet DeLong  
Molly Novotny  
Don Camp  
Chrystie Swiney  
Kathleen Tysse

**Guests:**

Councilwoman Liaison Marybeth Connelly

Ms. Oppenheimer informed the Board that since this is an online meeting, all necessary votes made by the Board will be done by roll call.

**Others in attendance:**

Director Jenny Carroll  
Administrative Assistant Claudia Gutierrez

**Other Guests:**

City Planner Shaina Leigh Schaffer  
Director of Public Works Mike Whitfield  
CIP Project Manager Lionel Mallard  
City Clerk Celeste Heath \*Joined the meeting only for a few minutes

**Not-in attendance:**

Planning Commission Liaison Rob Puentes

**2. RECEIPT OF PETITIONS**

No petitions

**3. APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 19, 2020 MEETING MINUTES**

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. DeLong and seconded by Mr. Camp, the Library Board unanimously approved the February 19, 2020 Meeting Minutes with minor changes.**

**ROLL CALL VOTE**

Stephanie Oppenheimer

Jeff Peterson

Chet DeLong

Molly Novotny

Jeff Peterson

Don Camp

Chrystie Swiney

Kathleen Tysse

**4. LIBRARY REPORT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Limited curbside service to address the backlog of reserves started Monday May 18. Full curbside service may start on June 1<sup>st</sup> depending on direction from the State, the City Government and Health instances.
- This year the library's summer reading program will be provided online through Beanstack; patrons can register and log books starting June 1<sup>st</sup>.
- The library will continue providing virtual programming such as Story Time, Mother Goose Minute on Fridays, regular book discussion groups, local author talks, and the amateur writers group. In addition, two new book discussion groups have started: the Jane Austen Book Group and the Mystery Book Group. Ms. Connelly added that Library Youth Services Supervisor, Jess Borchetta, has been working with her and the schools to provide Summer Reading Program informational videos to FCCPS. The Director mentioned the video will also be provided to St James Elementary/Middle School. She expressed her appreciation to the FCCPS for working together with the library.
- Police Chief Mary Gavin assembled a gun legislation working group to work on providing recommendations to City Council regarding the recent VA General Assembly changes. The library Director, Jenny Carroll, and board member, Kathleen Tysse, attended the first meeting and plan to continue to meet with the group. They met on Friday, May 15, and they will meet again on Thursday, May 21. Every year, the library

Board includes in their legislative agenda the request to prohibit guns in the library. Ms. Tysse remarked that it is a critical time for the gun legislation decision. The Director added that this working group can be invited to meet with the library Board. The Board requested library staff feedback on this issue as well.

- The Northern Virginia Transportation Authority Grants information that was provided to the Board, includes a section, Downtown Falls Church Multi Model Improvements, which will affect the library. On Park Avenue the plan calls for removal of sidewalk obstructions including the utility lines (undergrounding) and improving crosswalks. The Community is invited to provide feedback.
- Board member, Don Camp, inquired about changes to online services and how the potential increase in use would affect the budget. Streaming service (Kanopy and RBDigital) both saw an increase along with Overdrive (ebooks and eaudiobooks). Online services funding is adequate and in place. For FY21 the funding will have to be monitored to ensure the services remain within budget.

## **5. LIBRARY FOUNDATION REPORT**

Mr. Camp informed the Board that the Foundation Board filed their tax forms. The Foundation continues to receive contributions and has received \$1,500 in the past couple of months through mail and PayPal. In commemoration of the National Library Week, the Foundation provided \$20 gift cards to each library staff from One More Page bookstore in appreciation of their hard work during this difficult time. Mr. Camp thanked Ms. Tysse for the suggestion that at the same time supported a local business. Mr. Camp informed the Board that as of April 30, the bank account showed \$57,000, and the endowment invested in mutual funds was \$510,000 (lower than 2019 due to recent events in the stock market). The Foundation is prepared for what the library may need after the renovation is completed.

## **6. COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT**

Ms. Connelly informed the Board that City Council is in the midst of approving the FY21 budget presented by City Manager Wyatt Shields, which was delayed for a month due to COVID-19. The budget includes reductions in spending, a staff hiring freeze and elimination of overdue fines. Once Council approves the budget, they will review it in October to determine changes if needed. Ms. Connelly thanked all library and City staff for their hard work in keeping things going, making connections throughout the City of Falls Church, and taking care of citizens.

## **7. ARTS AND HUMANITIES COUNCIL REPORT (CATCH)**

Ms. Swiney informed the Board that a meeting has not been scheduled yet since only essential Boards and Commissions meetings can occur. Ms. Connelly added that it is likely that next month will be a CATCH meeting since there are two issues coming forward – Founder’s Row mural and public art policy. Once there is a meeting, Ms. Swiney will be officially sworn in as the Library Board representative.

## **8. LIBRARY PROJECT UPDATE**

Mr. Millard informed the Board that the overall construction project is on schedule with 10% completion despite the rain. The demolition is 95% completed and is expected to be finished by the end

of next week along with the site work. Concrete and steel work will start the first weeks of June. The interior of the building has been completely stripped and the electricians have started installing conduit. The next phase will include re-assembling the building and the construction of the addition. The construction progress has been a huge attraction to residents who have been stopping by and taking pictures/videos. Ms. Oppenheimer asked if there had been any unforeseen issues with demolition. Mr. Millard stated that concrete type bunkers were discovered under the bay windows; they were empty and did not pose an issue. OAC (Owner, Architect, Construction) meetings are occurring on a regular basis. Mr. Peterson requested an update regarding the LCOC. Mr. Millard stated that the group had not been formed yet due to COVID-19. Regular updates are being provided to the City Manager Wyatt Shields, Finance Director Kiran Bawa and the Library Director. The Library Construction Oversight Committee will be formed by two Council members, two representatives from Planning Commission, two representatives from the Library Board, and a representative from the public. The interviews for nominating the public representative will take place in June and Council will do the interviews.

## **9. NOMINATION OF OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES**

Ms. Oppenheimer asked each one of the Board members to express their interest in representing the Library Board on this Committee. This Committee will receive updates from the Lionel Millard on the library project. There was a consensus for Ms. Molly Novotny and Mr. Jeff Peterson to be the representatives and they accepted the nominations. Once the Committee is formed, a meeting schedule will be provided.

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. DeLong and seconded by Ms. Swiney, the Library Board unanimously approved the nomination for Ms. Molly Novotny and Mr. Jeff Peterson to be the Oversight Committee Representatives.**

### **ROLL CALL VOTE**

Stephanie Oppenheimer  
Jeff Peterson  
Chet DeLong  
Molly Novotny  
Jeff Peterson  
Don Camp  
Chrystie Swiney  
Kathleen Tysse

The Director informed the Board that Public Works Director Mike Whitfield will be resigning from the City and moving to another job as a Construction Manager in San Diego. The Director expressed her gratitude for all his hard work and support on the library renovation project.

## **10. DRAFT POLICY CIRCULATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS AND FINES/FEE SCHEDULE**

The Director reiterated that in February's Board meeting, the Board approved the elimination of overdue fines effective starting July 1, 2020. The Director informed the Board that as of today, the total fines accrued during this fiscal year (FY2020) was \$13,000 (as compared to last year which was \$26,000). There has not been any collection of fines since the library closed on March 16 due to COVID-19. If the library reopens to the public before the end of the fiscal year, it will be through curbside service and there won't be overdue fines assessed since due dates for books have been pushed

forward. Ms. Connelly suggested that the Director provide to Council an explanation about the removal of fines for a better understanding of the metrics and data. The Director stated that she can provide that information at the next meeting with Council. The fines and fees schedule has been updated to reflect removal of overdue fines with the exception of inter-library loan items. Items that are lost or damaged will still be assessed to the patron's account. The amount of the replacement cost for a lost or damaged book is the cost of the item plus a processing fee. If patrons find the lost item and they already paid for it, they will be reimbursed.

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Peterson and seconded by Mr. DeLong, the Library Board unanimously approved the Draft Policy Circulation of Materials and Fines/Fee schedule on its first reading.**

#### **ROLL CALL VOTE**

Stephanie Oppenheimer  
Jeff Peterson  
Chet DeLong  
Molly Novotny  
Jeff Peterson  
Don Camp  
Chrystie Swiney  
Kathleen Tysse

The Director requested to move up the West End Small Area plan presentation in the agenda

#### **11. WEST END SMALL AREA PLAN PRESENTATION (PLANNING DEPARTMENT)**

City Planner Shaina Leigh Schaffer presented an overview of the West End Small Plan. The presentation included planning opportunity areas for the City throughout the City School's parcels, the Property Yard and the Falls Plaza Shopping Center. The planning opportunity area presents improvements by providing safety crossings and friendly walkable connection areas, enhancing streetscapes, providing an attractive gateway to the City, and ways to coordinate a redevelopment on unutilized areas.

Planning is requesting Boards and Commissions reviews and comments. They will also have work sessions with Council and Planning Commission. Mr. Peterson suggested creating a connection between the West End and City's downtown. Ms. Schaffer asked if the Board would consider having the library included in a mixed use development as a private/public partnership. Mr. DeLong stated that the Board has consistently rejected the option of splitting the library due to the size of the small City and the high cost of operation. Ms. Novotny added that there is no need to reference the library on this project. Perhaps in the future it might be an option. Mr. Peterson suggested including as much greenery as possible, since there has been a significant loss of trees on different City projects. Mr. Camp suggested having emphasis on a bicycle access to the Metro. If the Board has any other comments or suggestions with regard to this development, the Board can submit them by June 10 through the Library Director.

#### **12. DISCUSSION OF BROAD AND WASHINGTON DEVELOPMENT VOLUNTARY CONCESSIONS**

Ms. Oppenheimer reminded the Board that on the January 2018, the Board sent a letter to

Council under Mr. Brad Gernand's (former Board Chair) signature regarding the Broad and Washington development. The letter referenced the Board's concern about the voluntary concessions being folded in with Parks and Recreation; unlike Founders Row, which the library had its own concession. There has been a new submission of the Broad and Washington Project since it first started. The Director sent the Board an email with the Planning Staff Comments Letter submitted to the developer on May 28, 2020 including a specific section on the library concession. Mr. Peterson drafted a letter for the Board's consideration to be sent to Council before the project is presented to Boards and Commissions.

Mr. Peterson mentioned some key points regarding this letter: 1. The voluntary concessions to the library be separated from Parks and Recreation. 2. To use the same metrics as Founders Row resulting in an increase up to roughly \$195,000. 3. Timing of the payment. 4. The use of the concession payment not be folded into the general expense fund of the City.

Mr. Peterson suggested the Board to be pro-active and express their views to Council before this project gets presented and all the negotiations about the concessions are potentially in place. This could also be a precedent for future projects. The Director suggested that the Board be more specific in what they ask from Council as they did in the submitted letter regarding Founder's Row. In that letter the Board wrote the voluntary concession using the language that they desired. Ms. Oppenheimer requested that the Director provide the 2018 letter and Mr. Peterson's draft letter to the Board and include the voluntary concession discussion on the June Board meeting agenda. Ms. Novotny asked if the developers pay into a Capital Facilities Fund. Mr. Peterson will make some changes to his letter and will submit it to the Director to be included in the digital packet.

### **13. BUSINESS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

None

### **14. ADJOURNMENT**

**There being no further business, upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Jenny Carroll  
Library Director

Approved:

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Stephanie Oppenheimer, Chairperson

Copies: Board of Trustees, City Manager, Library Reference Desk, Staff Bulletin Board, City Clerk, Library Web Page

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